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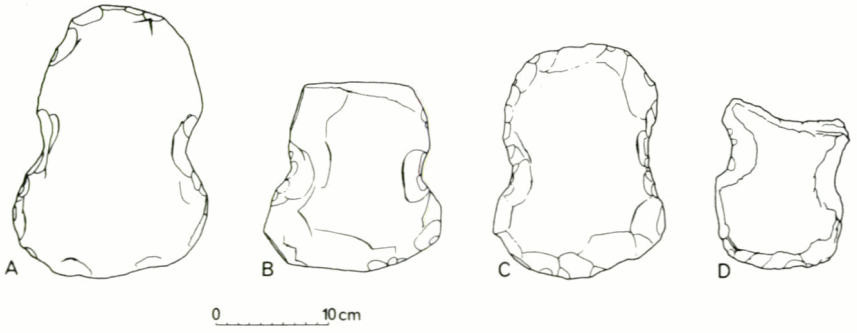
in which the island was particularly rich. I am indebted to Mr H.J. Gibbney of the Research School of Social Sciences, A.N.U., for bringing these references to my attention.

There is evidence for Aborigines having visited other offshore islands along the south coast of New South Wales. In his journal of 1797, the explorer George Bass refers to Aborigines on Brush Island, 1 km offshore from Murramarang Point. Writing in the *Proceedings of the Geographical Society of Australia* for 1883, J.F. Mann tells of Aboriginal canoe voyages to the Tollgate Islands, 3-4 km out from the headlands flanking the entrance to the Clyde River. Like Montagu Island, both Brush Island and the Tollgates have muttonbird rookeries.

R.J. Lampert

A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON SOME WAISTED BLADES FOUND ON KANGAROO ISLAND, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

While examining surface collections of Kartan tools from Kangaroo Island, I saw six implements that bear a striking resemblance to the flaked waisted blades of Papua New Guinea. Of the four illustrated here, A - C were found recently on a pastoral lease and are owned by the farmer, while D, together with another waisted tool, was discovered by the archaeologist H.M. Cooper. Both of the specimens collected by Cooper are in the South Australian Museum and are already on record (Cooper 1968). A sixth implement, in the museum at Kingscote, came to light on a pastoral lease not far from the one on which specimens A - C were found. The descriptions given here are based on photographs taken with a hand-held camera, brief notes and a few basic measurements. Fuller details will follow a future examination.



With the exception of one, made on a quartzite pebble, the tools are made on flattish slabs that appear to have formed by splitting along parallel natural fracture planes in the stone. The most characteristic feature of the tools is a pair of almost identical, opposing notches flaked bifacially into their long sides. As well as the notches, most of the rest of the margin of a tool is flaked bifacially, providing fairly sharp edges, except on one specimen (fig. B) which has flattish, unflaked ends.

Archaeologists working in Papua New Guinea assume that very similar waisted blades found there functioned as axes, the ends of a tool being its cutting edges and the notches a hafting device (Golson 1971, Allen 1972, Bulmer forthcoming). Compared with the New Guinea tools, those from Kangaroo Island fall within the range of forms given by Bulmer (forthcoming) and appear to share the same techniques of manufacture. In length, the six tools range between 15 and 26 cm with a mean of 19 cm. By contrast, the Yuku waisted blades, which are the largest among the New Guinea collections, range between 8.5 and 21.5 cm with a mean of 12.1 cm. These ranges overlap, but the mean values are dissimilar enough to suggest that Kangaroo Island tools may be generally larger than their New Guinea counterparts.

As well as the Kangaroo Island specimens, Cooper (1968) records two, or possibly three, other flaked tools with opposed notches from mainland South Australia. I saw another in a private collection made near Wellington, New South Wales. McCarthy (1967:53) describes 'Mackay hammerstones' as,

> "large, roughly-made implements fashioned from weathered flat pieces of [stone]. Most of them are deeply waisted on each side and occasional specimens are fully grooved. .....The waist was shaped by flaking, and was then apparently battered by use. No description of their use exists. They are from 4 to 7 inches long, and up to almost 7 pounds in weight. The best series known is from Mackay district in Queensland, but others have been found in eastern New South Wales."

I examined three Mackay hammerstones, including the specimen figured by McCarthy (1967:72), at the Australian Museum. Their lengths are 16, 16 and 24 cm, and they have opposing, bifacially flaked notches as described for the Kangaroo Island specimens. Only one, McCarthy's illustrated example, is bifacially flaked at the end; the other two have unflaked, flattish ends formed by weathered, natural fracture planes. No pecking, typical of hammerstone use, was seen on these surfaces. My impression, based on rather inadequate samples, is that the Queensland and Kangaroo Island tools do not differ greatly.

The above evidence, leads me to suggest that waisted blades have a widespread distribution in Australia but are not common enough to have attracted notice. Other specimens could exist in

museum collections, with their identity obscured simply through not being named by the recently coined term, waisted blade.

In New Guinea the earliest waisted blades have an antiquity of at least 26,000 years and their use continued well into the post-Pleistocene (White *et al.* 1970). On eustatic evidence the Kangaroo Island specimens are almost certainly older than 10,000 years (Lampert 1972), while their massiveness suggests direct association with the Kartan industry which has a probably antiquity exceeding 16,000 years and may be considerably older (Lampert forthcoming).

Before the Kangaroo Island specimens came to light, flaked waisted blades had not been recognised anywhere in Australia. Because Australia and New Guinea were joined throughout the Pleistocene, the presence of waisted blades at several sites of Pleistocene age in New Guinea, and an apparent absence of the tools in Australia, had been seen either as perplexing (Allen 1972:185) or as indicative of regional diversity within the continent of Australia-New Guinea (Howells 1973:188). However, the presence of waisted blades in Australia supports the view that the old land mass had a broadly uniform technology, an opinion advanced by Allen (1972) and Jones (1973) through similarities they saw in other tools of flaked stone.

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FIELDWORK IN NORTH QUEENSLAND

As part of a field survey of the Herbert/Burdekin district in North Queensland, four small excavations were undertaken during 1974. These were at the foot of the range to the west of Kennedy; near Jourama, about 15 kilometres south-west of Ingham; at the base of Herveys Range, 25 kilometres west of Townsville; and near Mount Roundback, approximately 20 kilometres north of Bowen.

Shell material, not yet analysed, was obtained from all sites, and bone was also found in all sites, although markedly less at Mount Roundback. Analysis of this material is in progress. Preliminary examination of the stone artifacts and waste material shows a predominance of quartz, particularly at Mount Roundback where the deposit consisted almost entirely of quartz, with only a few definite signs of utilization. The three sites to the north all produced a greater amount and more varied utilized material than Mount Roundback, particularly Herveys Range and Jourama. In no case however does the typical typology seem to apply: utilized pieces are quite irregular and there is very little evidence of secondary retouch.

At this stage available dates are:

Kennedy	(40-50 cms)	685 ± 105 BP	GX3666
Mount Roundback	(10-15 cms)	1130 ± 130 BP	GX3670
	(25-30 cms)	1650 ± 120 BP	GX3669
Jourama	(15-25 cms)	1450 ± 110 BP	GX3667/8

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